

had they heard the words of the Fathers who hastened to instruct them, than they surrendered to the truths of our faith, received Baptism, and, at the height of their tortures, sang that they would be happy in Heaven. But all the more cruel was the fury of the infidel Hurons, who, because they had been unable, with all the opposition they could make, to deprive these men of their happiness, wished to make them suffer in this life a semblance of the torments that, as they are often told, are suffered by Souls in hell.

About the end of the summer, we at last received [9] news of the misfortune that had happened on the river through the defeat and capture of some of our French, and of a fleet of the choicest Christians that we have among the Hurons. As they were returning from the Three rivers, they fell into the ambush of a band of Iroquois, as may have been learned, I believe, from the Relation of last year that was sent from Kebec. For fear of repetition, I will not speak of that disaster, but will merely say that the loss of the persons who were involved therein was the heaviest blow that has yet been dealt to the Christianity of the Hurons.

We have been almost a year in uncertainty as to what may have happened to them; in dread that those barbarians may have made them feel the cruelty of their tortures; in the desire of hearing particulars, and all that may have made their sufferings more precious in the sight of God; finally, in the hope that some one of them whose life might have been spared would escape from his captivity, and bring us back positive information which [10] would cause us to bless God's goodness in the midst